

Full Fathom Five

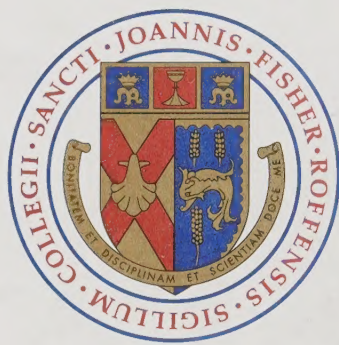
a workshop approach to

THE TEMPEST

Brenda Pinder

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Full Fathom Five

a workshop approach to

THE TEMPEST

Brenda Pinder

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Alternative Viewpoint: Caliban

- Evidence -

EXAMPLE 1

Caliban: *This island's mine, by Sycorax my mother,
Which thou tak'st from me. When thou cam'st first,
Thou strok'st me, and made much of me; wouldst give me
Water with berries in 't; and teach me how
To name the bigger light, and how the less,
That burn by day and night: and then I lov'd thee,
And show'd thee all the qualities o' th' isle,
The fresh springs, brine-pits, barren place and fertile:
Curs'd be I that did so! All the charms
Of Sycorax, toads, beetles, bats, light on you!
For I am all the subjects that you have,
Which first was mine own King: and here you sty me
In this hard rock, whiles you do keep from me
The rest o' th' island.*

(I ii 333-346)

EXAMPLE 2

Caliban: *Be not afeard; the isle is full of noises,
Sounds and sweet airs, that give delight, and hurt not.
Sometimes a thousand twangling instruments
Will hum about mine ears; and sometime voices,
That, if I then had wak'd after long sleep,
Will make me sleep again: and then, in dreaming,
The clouds methought would open, and show riches
Ready to drop upon me; that, when I wak'd,
I cried to dream again.*

(III ii 133-141)

- Activity -

You may feel there is some justice in Caliban's claim to own the island and in his bitterness against Prospero. Remind yourself how Caliban came to the island (I ii 269-286). From his point of view Prospero must seem a usurper, and unjust in his treatment of Caliban. (Though we hear from Prospero the reasons for this.)

Skim through the text to find scenes in which Caliban appears. How much of the events on the island might he be aware of? (Storm? Ferdinand?) Make notes on how he might see these things.

Now use your notes to write Caliban's account, in the form of a diary or interior monologue, of all he has seen and heard during the course of the play (and some time before). Try to interpret events the way he would and to capture his characteristic language. Remember he is not unaware of the beauties and natural wealth of the island. (III ii 133-141 and II ii 160-172.)

- Follow Up -

Write a short paragraph by each of the following *about* Caliban:

- Prospero
- Miranda
- Stephano
- Trinculo

In what important point(s) would each of these views of Caliban differ from Caliban's own understanding or point of view?

The Story So Far

– Evidence –

The play begins as Prospero's plans for revenge on Alonso and his brother are coming to fruition; he has them on his island, driven there by his magical storm, and held in his power by Ariel. The plot of the play is grounded in events that precede it, and early scenes involve a lot of background storytelling.

- Remind yourself of the account Prospero gives Miranda of how they came to be there. (I ii 33 onwards)
- Look at his reminders to Ariel of how he rescued Ariel from the cloven pine (270-293) and to Caliban, about how his trust was betrayed. (I ii 332-367)

– Activity –

Imagine you are writing a story for young children – say eight to ten year-olds – and describe the magical events that have happened before the play in a language and style they would readily understand. You may also include the Miranda story, and finish by telling them that Prospero now has all his enemies in his power.

You may wish to illustrate your story with your own drawings or a collage of fragments cut from magazines.

The exercise will help to clarify your own understanding of the plot and the workings of Prospero's magic which prepare us for his later schemes.

– Follow Up –

Collect the stories together and offer them to a local primary school. Perhaps their teacher would ask the children to write their predictions of what they think will happen on the island and let you see their forecasts.

Or you could act out the story for a young audience, perhaps with storyteller and mime.

On And Off

- Evidence -

The chart below lists main characters and scenes:

Prospero									
Miranda									
Ferdinand									
Ariel									
Caliban									
Alonso									
Gonzalo									
Antonio									
Sebastian									
Trinculo									
Stephano									
Master & Crew									
Goddesses									
	i	ii	i	ii	i	ii	iii	Act IV	Act V
	Act I		Act II		Act III				

- Activity -

This exercise is to help you sort out various threads of the plot. On the chart on the previous page mark entrances and exits of the major characters. You could subdivide some of the very long scenes by page numbers to make arrivals and departures clearer.

You can also add more detail to this simple chart by using different colours to represent various threads of the plot. Any scene that develops, say, the Miranda-Ferdinand story and the Prospero-Caliban one would have the two different colours marked on it. Try to develop the idea with your own suggestions to make the storylines clearer: it is far easier to remember things you have recorded in visual form.

- Follow Up -

Invent your own version of Prospero's island and make a map of it, marking the important locations like Prospero's cell, where Ferdinand lands, etc, and plot onto it the routes taken by the various groups of characters until they all meet at the end.

Relationships: Visual Presentation

- Evidence -

Look up these aspects of Prospero's relationships with others in the play.

- To Miranda, Prospero describes his brother as "false" (I ii 77, 92), yet in the final scene (V i 78-9) he forgives him.
- He tells Miranda that Ferdinand is a "traitor" (I ii 463), yet the audience knows by his asides that this is pretence.
- He abuses Caliban (I ii) yet acknowledges him as his own. (V i 275-6)

These are just a few of the conflicting pieces of evidence to be considered in looking at his relationships. They suggest that Prospero is a complex character and that his feelings towards others are far from simple.

- Activity -

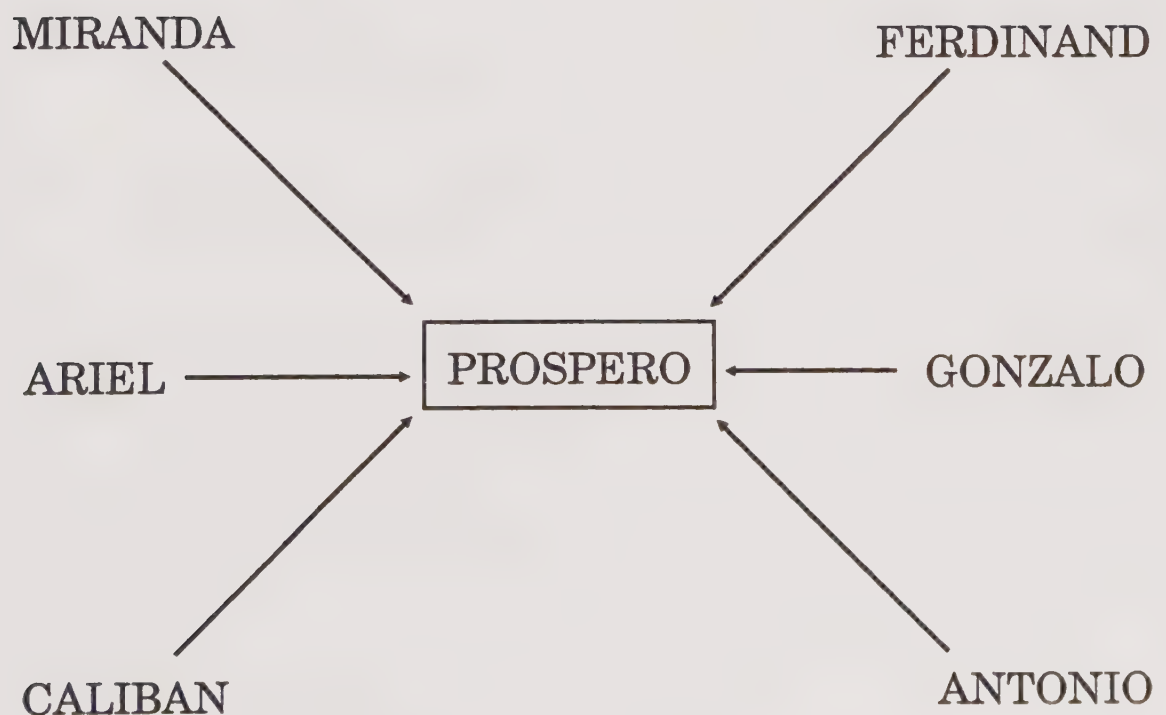
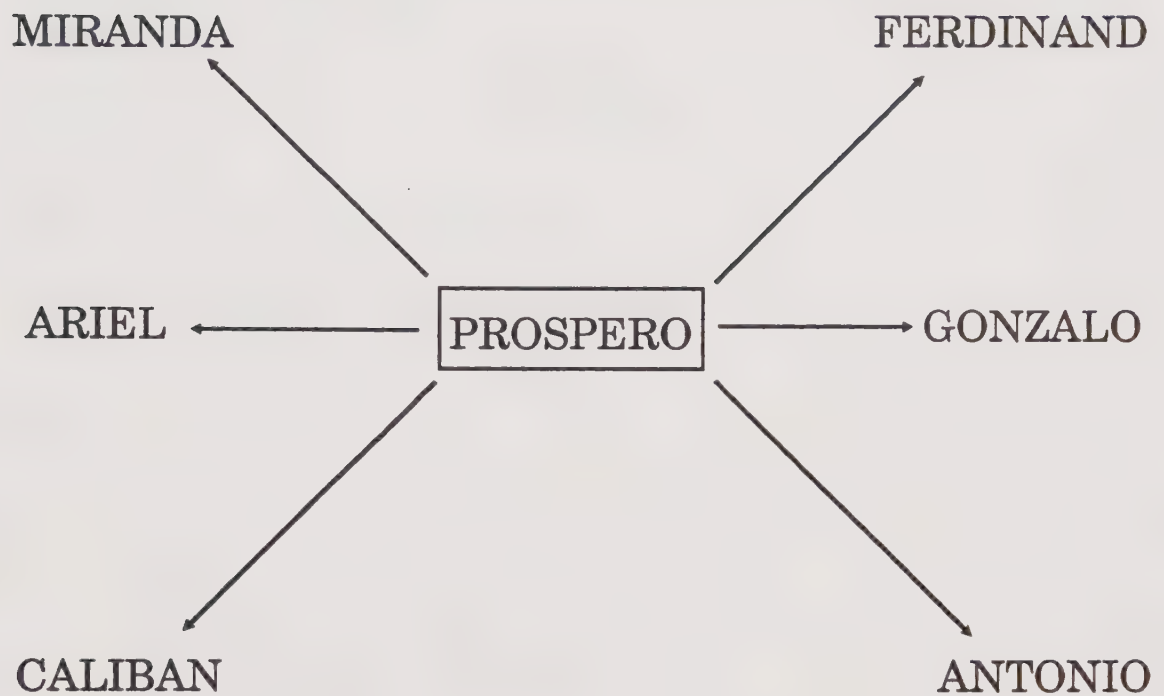
Look at the spider charts *on the next page*, which are intended to clarify your interpretations of Prospero's underlying feelings about the characters round the outside. On the *first* chart write a short quotation along the arrow to sum up what you decide is Prospero's view of each. (They may or may not be lines spoken by Prospero.)

On the *second* chart, which reverses the direction of the arrows, find quotations to indicate the feelings of each of the characters about **Prospero**.

- Follow Up -

Choose any other character from the play and repeat the exercise. (You will find it is easier to remember things if you have put them down in a visual, diagrammatic form.)

You may be able to devise other ways of presenting your ideas, with quotations to illustrate them, in visual form. Share any ideas you have with the rest of the class.



The Masque in Freeze Frames

- Evidence -

- Cer. *Tell me, heavenly bow,
If Venus or her son, as thou dost know,
Do now attend the queen? Since they did plot
The means that dusky Dis my daughter got,
Her and her blind boy's scandal'd company
I have forsworn.*
- Iris. *Of her society
Be not afraid: I met her deity
Cutting the clouds towards Paphos, and her son
Dove-drawn with her. Here thought they to have done
Wove wanton charm upon this man and maid,
Whose vows are, that no bed-right shall be paid
Till Hymen's torch be lighted: but in vain;
Mars's hot minion is return'd again;
Her waspish-headed son has broke his arrows,
Swears he will shoot no more, but play with sparrows,
And be a boy right out.*
- Cer. *Highest queen of State,
Great Juno comes; I know her by her gait.*
- Juno. *How does my bounteous sister? Go with me
To bless this twain, that they may prosperous be,
And honour'd in their issue. (They sing:)*
- Juno. *Honour, riches, marriage-blessing,
Long continuance, and increasing,
Hourly joys be still upon you!
Juno sings her blessings on you.*
- Cer. *Earth's increase, foison plenty,
Barns and garners never empty;
Vines with clust'ring bunches growing;
Plants with goodly burthen bowing;
Spring come to you at the farthest
In the very end of harvest!
Scarcity and Want shall shun you;
Ceres' blessing so is on you.*

The Masque is often omitted from modern productions yet the images and symbols of these lines are central to the play. Venus and her son Cupid are put to flight and chastity promises the rewards of plenty and fruitfulness. Prospero has already warned Ferdinand that if he should “break her virgin knot” before the ceremonies of marriage then discord and “loathly weeds” (IV i 13-23) will follow. Gonzalo has seen the island as “lush and lusty” (II i 51) and Adrian finds that the air “breathes upon us here most sweetly” (45), while those who are deaf to the music of the island (see activity called *Music and Songs*) are also blind to its fertility and beauty. Sebastian and Antonio find it “as ’twere perfum’d by a fen” (47) and without means to sustain life; they ridicule Gonzalo’s vision of a pastoral idyll. (139-179) Reactions to the beauty of the island by each character may point to certain sensibilities and sympathetic (or unsympathetic) states of mind. (Exploration of different states of mind is an important aspect of the play.)

- Activity -

Divide into threes or fours and read aloud the whole of the Masque, noticing the formality of the language and the stylised presentation of the goddesses. Now devise a series of freeze frames – about five tableaux – to represent the content of the speeches. Realism is not required so concentrate on symbolism to create a series of images with your bodies. Present these, accompanied by words, to the rest of the class.

- Follow Up -

Investigate the traditions of the masque form with the help of an encyclopedia or reference book on the theatre.

Then compare the language Shakespeare uses here (which is a kind of serious parody of the traditional style of the masque) with that of the rest of the play. Notice the rhyming couplets, images of idealised pastoral scene, lack of colloquial directness, etc, and find contrasting examples from the rest of the play.

Ten Years On

– Evidence –

The following lines are all from the last scene: (V i)

Prospero: *I'll break my staff
Bury it certain fadoms in th' earth
And deeper than did ever plummet sound,
I'll drown my book.* (54-57)

Prospero: *But you, my brace of lords, were I so minded,
I here could pluck his highness' frown upon you,
And justify you traitors: at this time
I will tell no tales.* (126-129)

Gonzalo: *Was Milan thrust from Milan, that his issue
Should become kings of Naples?* (205-206)

Prospero: *This thing of darkness I
Acknowledge mine.* (275-276)

Prospero: *And thence retire me to my Milan, where
Every third thought shall be my grave.* (310-311)

Look up the context of these lines. What do they suggest might follow, after the end of the play?

- Prospero intends to rule Milan without his magic. Will this prove difficult?
- What are the prospects for Ferdinand and Miranda's married happiness?
- Prospero accepts responsibility for Caliban. Will he take him to Milan? If so, what will life be like for him there?
- Prospero decides not to tell Alonso about Sebastian and Antonio's treachery. Do they show any signs of repentance?

– Activity –

Working in pairs, imagine all the characters after ten more years and discuss what you think might be happening to them. Will Prospero make the same mistakes as last time? Will there be more trouble from Antonio?

How will Sebastian react to the rediscovery of Ferdinand, Alonso's heir? What will life be like for Caliban in the new Milan? Prepare notes on these and any other points that interest you for a class discussion.

- Follow Up -

- Improvise, in groups, on life in Milan and Naples ten years on. Remember that the forecast you make is not directly relevant to your study of the play – only in the light it sheds on character and theme in the play itself.
- Write an essay on the theme of reconciliation and forgiveness in the play.

Order and Disorder

– Evidence –

The usurping of Prospero's rule of Milan by his brother, and Alonso, is not the only example of natural order overthrown in the play. Consider the following examples:

- The storm: the overthrow of nature's order
- Antonio and Sebastian's plot to murder Alonso and take over Naples (II i 201-90)
- The plot of Caliban, Stephano and Trinculo to overthrow Prospero's rule of the island (III ii 85-93) which is a kind of parody of the initiating action all those years ago in Milan

To the Elizabethans, the bond between subject and ruler would have seemed as natural as that between brothers; both of these loyalties are cast aside by those who rebel in the play. But was Prospero himself guilty in any way? Did his neglect of his duties as a ruler in order to pursue his studies amount to an overthrow of the natural order? Or is this taking the idea too far?

– Activity –

Antonio, Sebastian, Alonso and Caliban are all to be put on trial for their rebellions, and they, in turn, will accuse Prospero.

Divide into five groups – one to put Prospero's view and one to plead mitigating circumstances in the case of each of the others. You will need to collect as much evidence from the actual lines of the play as you can, to argue your particular case.

When you have prepared the material, hold a public investigation. The Prospero group accuses each of the others in turn; they defend themselves as well as they can and point out Prospero's own faults in their case.

Try to devise a way in which the proceedings can be brought to a satisfactory conclusion – perhaps with Prospero's lines of forgiveness for each of them.

- Follow Up -

The theme of nature and of what constitutes natural behaviour is worth exploring. Skim the text for examples of the use of the word 'natural' (you may have done this in the activity called *Patterns of Imagery*) and make a list of all the natural bonds you can find between characters. Then look closely at the Masque (see also the activity on this) and especially at Ceres, Goddess of Nature and Fertility. Check on the opposing views of the natural surroundings of the island offered by Gonzalo, Sebastian and Antonio in II i, and on the warnings of Prospero to Ferdinand in IV i 13-23.

Using all these, prepare notes on the theme of nature and fertility in the play and discuss your points with a partner. You could then develop your ideas in a longer piece of writing on this theme.

Film Adaptation

– Evidence –

ENTER Prospero and Miranda.

Miranda: *If by your Art, my dearest father, you have
Put the wild waters in this roar, allay them.
The sky, it seems, would pour down stinking pitch,
But that the sea, mounting to th' welkin's cheek,
Dashes the fire out. O, I have suffered
With those that I saw suffer! a brave vessel,
(Who had, no doubt, some noble creature in her,)
Dash'd all to pieces. O, the cry did knock
Against my very heart! Poor souls, they perish'd!
Had I been any god of power, I would
Have sunk the sea within the earth, or ere
It should the good ship so have swallow'd, and
The fraughting souls within her.*

Prospero: *Be collected:
No more amazement: tell your piteous heart
There's no harm done.*

Miranda: *O, woe the day!*

Prospero: *No harm.
I have done nothing but in care of thee,
Of thee, my dear one; thee, my daughter, who
Art ignorant of what thou art; nought knowing
Of whence I am, nor that I am more better
Than Prospero, master of a full poor cell,
And thy no greater father.*

Miranda: *More to know
Did never meddle with my thoughts.*

Prospero: *Tis time
I should inform thee farther. Lend thy hand,
And pluck my magic garment from me. — So:*
[Lays down his mantle]
*Lie there, my Art. Wipe thou thine eyes; have comfort.
The direful spectacle of the wrack, which touch'd
The very virtue of compassion in thee,
I have with such provision in mine Art
So safety ordered, that there is no soul —
No, not so much perdition as an hair
Betid to any creature in the vessel
Which thou heard'st cry, which thou saw'st sink.
Sit down;
For thou must now know farther.*

These are the opening speeches of I ii, the first scene that takes place on the island, the first scene being the storm at sea.

- Activity -

As with the activity called *Prompt Copy*, the purpose of this activity is to create drama out of a printed script, but this time in terms of film rather than theatre. Concentrating on the opening conversation between Prospero and Miranda, think what images you would want to show your audience before the actors begin to speak. Would you want a general view of the island from above? Would you then zoom in to Prospero's cell? Or are there other images you would want to project even before this? – say, the sea itself, still wild after the storm, as Miranda's first words suggest?

Make a list of camera shots (there's no need to worry about technical words, though 'closeup' and 'panorama' can be useful), which would precede and accompany these first few speeches. Remember that in a film the director chooses what the audience will see, and concentrate on, far more specifically than the theatre producer.

Decide whose face we should look at while Prospero and Miranda speak: it does not, of course, have to be the speaker. You can also direct our eyes towards scenes and objects – the sea, Prospero's cloak, the books in his cell, etc.

Perhaps the best way to present your work is to paste the script of the section you are doing on the left of a sheet of paper and write camera shots next to it on the right.

Share ideas with the rest of the class by displaying them or handing them round and talking about them.

- Follow Up -

Some effective writing can come out of this process too. Remove from your list all references to the camera, leaving just a list of images, and write them underneath one another, one image to a line. The result can be a surprisingly vivid poem. Try it with your list, revising and adding to your first draft until you are satisfied with it. Then make a copy for display, to share your response with others.

Prospero's Magic

- Evidence -

Working in pairs, look up the following references and discuss what they show you about the purpose and results of Prospero's magic.

1. The Storm – how do we learn it is the result of his magic? (Miranda I ii 1-2 and Ariel, 198-237)
2. Ariel (instructed by Prospero I ii 319) leads Ferdinand with his song to meet Miranda (I ii 377). How do we know Ferdinand's and Miranda's reactions (496-7) are what Prospero intended?
3. Ariel's music puts to sleep all of Alonso's party except Sebastian and Antonio (II i 185) and wakes them to avert danger (295). What do you think was Prospero's purpose in putting them to sleep in the first place?
4. Prospero watches Ferdinand and Miranda while invisible. (III i 15 onwards) What can we deduce from his asides?
5. Ariel's interventions in the conversations between Caliban, Stephano and Trinculo cause strife between them. (III ii 40 onwards) Is this just mischief or averting danger again?
6. Prospero presents a banquet which is snatched away before it can be eaten. (III iii 18 and 52) What is Prospero's intention in this trick? How is it symbolic of earlier behaviour? Look closely at Ariel's Harpy speech: what is the effect on the guilty?
7. Notice how Prospero's sudden recollection of the Caliban plot breaks up the magic of the Masque. (See activity called *The Masque in Freeze Frames*.)
8. What aspects of Ariel's punishment of the Caliban party (IV i 171 and 254) and the temptation of them with "glistening apparel" (193) are paralleled elsewhere in the story?
9. Prospero's renunciation of his magic (V i 50-7) after a summary of what his powers have achieved: who shows him that the only truly human course is to forgive his enemies?

- Activity -

In pairs, compose a dialogue between Prospero and Ariel at the final moment of the play. Ariel questions Prospero about his magic, how he found such power, what he was trying to achieve by it, etc, and Prospero answers him before finally saying goodbye.

Each pair performs their dialogue to another pair, comparing interpretations.

- Follow Up -

Ariel and Caliban are sometimes thought of as the two sides of Prospero's nature – Caliban the animal side, Ariel the learning and power of the mind. Can you find any supporting evidence for this theory? Notice that Prospero does not reject Caliban at the end of the play:

*"this thing of darkness I
Acknowledge mine."* (V i 275-6)

Ariel and Caliban never speak to each other in the play, though Caliban is aware of Ariel's music. (III ii 133) Why should this be?

You might like to write on the relationship of Ariel and Prospero in the play. Look at the way they address one another as well as at the examples of magic above.

You might also consider writing about how magic creates both punishment and reconciliation in *The Tempest*.

Music and Songs

– Evidence –

ARIEL[’s] song.

*Come unto these yellow sands,
And then take hands:
Courtsied when you have and kiss’d
The wild waves whist:
Foot it featly here and there,
And sweet sprites bear
The burthen. Hark, hark.*

Burthen dispersedly. Bow-wow.

The watch dogs bark:

[Burthen dispersedly.] Bow-wow.

*Hark, hark! I hear
The strain of strutting chanticleer*

Cry [Burthen dispersedly.] *Cock a didle dow.*

(I ii 377-389)

ARIEL[’s] song.

*Full fadom five thy father lies;
Of his bones are coral made;
Those are pearls that were his eyes:
Nothing of him that doth fade,
But doth suffer a sea-change
Into something rich and strange.
Sea-nymphs hourly ring his knell:*

Burthen: *Ding-dong.*

Hark! now I hear them, — Ding-dong, bell.

(I ii 399-407)

Ferdinand, in line 394, bears witness to the magical powers of Ariel’s music, which seems to pacify both the waves and his own troubled spirits.

In the image of the bones of his father transformed by a “sea-change” into “something rich and strange” there is perhaps an allegory of the whole play; some of those affected by Prospero’s magic, like Alonso, are indeed transformed and reborn. T S Eliot, in *The Waste Land*, uses these very lines to set against his allegorical desert landscape of modern life where he finds little evidence of “sea-change”. So Ariel’s songs seem more than decorative: they present us with echoes of the play’s themes and images.

- Activity -

Take a close look at all the songs and references to music listed below:

1. Music is used to put Alonso and others to sleep and to alert them to danger. (II i 179-185 and 295-300) Why do Antonio and Sebastian only speak of a “hollow burst of bellowing”? (306) Were they just covering up?
2. Stephano’s and Caliban’s drunken ditties. (II ii 43-55 and 178-185)
3. Panic is created in Stephano and Trinculo by Ariel’s intervention. (III ii 119-121) Caliban is unafraid and sees the island’s music as beneficial (132-141).
4. The Banquet placed before Alonso’s party is accompanied by “solemn and strange music”. (III iii 18 and 82)
5. “Soft music” accompanies the words of the goddesses in the Masque (IV i) and the whole culminates in a “graceful dance” in which harmonious movement and music combine. When Prospero remembers the Caliban conspiracy, music turns to “a strange hollow and confused noise”. (138)
6. In the last scene, Prospero uses “heavenly music” (52) to calm the anguish of his captives. As they are frozen under his charm, Ariel sings a song full of natural images. (88, 94)

Discuss all these examples with a partner.

- What links can you find between music and magic?
- Who hears and who is deaf to the music of the play? Why?
- Is music linked with harmony in behaviour?

- Follow Up -

Look up references to *dance* in the play, and discuss how these are related to the music.

Patterns of Imagery

- Evidence -

When we look closely at most of Shakespeare's plays, we can find groups of recurring images – as though he were making connections and underlying threads as he was writing. Each time an image recurs, it comes to us with the cumulative force of the previous occasions, and repeated words and ideas gradually build a network of associations.

Look up the following examples – all from one scene (I ii) – and a few of their connections later in the play.

1. *he was*
The ivy which had hid my princely trunk,
And suck'd my verdure out on't. (85-87)

(weeds so loathly, IV i 21, picks up a similar idea)
2. *To have no screen between this part he play'd*
And him he play'd it for, he needs will be
Absolute Milan. (107-109)

(compare with Prospero's "revels" speech in IV i 145-163)
3. *On their sustaining garments, not a blemish.* (218)
(compare with Gonzalo's comments, II i 59-62)
4. *Jove's lightnings and the mighty Neptune* (201, 205)

(compare with the Masque's goddesses)
5. *a freckled whelp, hag-born; thou tortoise* (283, 318) and *here you sty me in this hard rock* (344-345) are recalled when we realise Trinculo sees Caliban as a monster in II ii 25 onwards.
6. *pearls that were his eyes* (401) and *sea-change* (403) link with
And deeper than did ever plummet sound
I'll drown my book. (V i 56-57)

These are only a few of the possible verbal connections to be found with I ii.

- Activity -

Divide into four groups, each taking one of the remaining acts (ie, II-V). Look through it carefully and collect any striking images and echoes you can find, listing them under the following headings:

- a) the natural world;
- b) the sea/storm;
- c) monsters and animals;
- d) gods and goddesses;
- e) sky and stars;
- f) clothes;
- g) acting and pretence;
- h) any other effective images which are not included in the list.

Display your examples from each act under these headings and discuss them as a class.

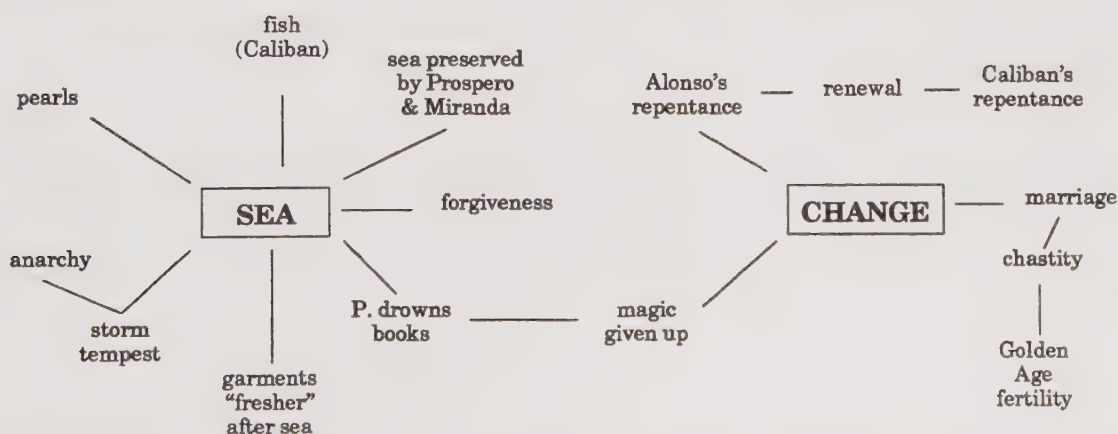
- Follow Up -

Another striking feature of the language of *The Tempest* is the number of compound words – like “man-monster”, “sea-change”, “pinch-spotted”, “inch-meal”, etc.

Working in the same groups, find examples from your act and share them with other groups.

Individual work: Choose one or two of these compound expressions and explore their associations on the lines of the example below.

Add any others which occur to you on this diagram before you do the same with your chosen example. Then compare notes with a partner and discuss your word associations.



Personal Allegory?

- Evidence -

EPILOGUE

Spoken by PROSPERO
*Now my charms are all o'erthrown,
 And what strength I have's mine own,
 Which is most faint: now, 'tis true,
 I must be here confin'd by you,
 Or sent to Naples. Let me not,
 Since I have my dukedom got,
 And pardon'd the deceiver, dwell
 In this bare island by your spell;
 But release me from my bands
 With the help of your good hands:
 Gentle breath of yours my sails
 Must fill, or else my project fails,
 Which was to please. Now I want
 Spirits to enforce, Art to enchant;
 And my ending is despair,
 Unless I be reliev'd by prayer,
 Which pierces so, that it assaults
 Mercy itself, and frees all faults.
 As you from crimes would pardon'd be,
 Let your indulgence set me free. Exit.*

- Activity -

It is generally agreed that *The Tempest* is Shakespeare's last play and, because of this, many people have interpreted Prospero's final speech as Shakespeare's farewell to the theatre before he retired to Stratford on Avon.

The lines can be read simply as an actor's appeal to the audience for applause (a similar speech by Puck concludes *A Midsummer Night's Dream*) – asking for release from his role by their clapping. It has also been interpreted as Shakespeare's apology to James I, an expert on witchcraft and magic, for straying onto his territory. But it is the references to prayer and Christian mercy that perhaps suggest some further allegory. It is possible to see it as the retiring playwright fearing that he must stand on his own feet as a man without his art (like Prospero without his). Therefore, concerned with his soul's survival, he seeks the intercession of others' prayers.

Notice that Prospero starts in character – “I must be here confin’d by you / Or sent to Naples”, but later speaks as actor or maybe playwright. In the last lines he is perhaps just a fellow human, asking for our prayers.

Other critics have found this Epilogue so banal and trite they have refused to believe it is by Shakespeare and have written it off as a later addition. A Victorian editor of the play, Grant White, dismissed it in these words:

Will anyone familiar with Shakespeare’s works believe, that after writing such a play, he would write an Epilogue in which the feeble trite ideas are confined within stiff couplets, or else carried into the middle of a third line, and there left in hopeless consternation, like an awkward booby, who suddenly finds himself alone in the centre of a ballroom? (1858)

Write a reply to this view: work in pairs and defend the authenticity of the Epilogue in any way you can. You may argue the relevance of the lines to Prospero, and/or to Shakespeare, and defend its theatrical effectiveness for the audience. Find reasons, if you can, for the different metre and style.

– Follow Up –

An American critic, Irwin Smith, suggested that the ‘revels’ speech was originally the Epilogue and that the Masque and the Epilogue are later additions, by another hand. Look at the ‘revels’ speech (IV i 148-158) and consider what qualities it would have as an epilogue. Can you find any ideas or features of style that link it with the end of the play rather than the Masque? What extra meanings would it convey if it were to be placed there?

Remember that these speculations about changes to the play are only indirectly relevant to your study of it: they should serve to direct your attention back to the details of the play as we have it.

Active Soliloquy

– Evidence –

*Ye elves of hills, brooks, standing lakes, and groves;
And ye that on the sands with printless foot
Do chase the ebbing Neptune, and do fly him
When he comes back; you demi-puppets that
By moonshine do the green sour ringlets make,
Whereof the ewe not bites; and you whose pastime
Is to make midnight mushrooms, that rejoice
To hear the solemn curfew; by whose aid –
Weak masters though ye be – I have bedimm'd
The noontide sun, call'd forth the mutinous winds,
And 'twixt the green sea and the azur'd vault
Set roaring war: to the dread rattling thunder
Have I given fire, and rifted Jove's stout oak
With his own bolt; the strong-bas'd promontory
Have I made shake, and by the spurs pluck'd up
The pine and cedar: graves at my command
Have wak'd their sleepers, op'd, and let 'em forth
By my so potent Art. But this rough magic
I here abjure; and, when I have requir'd
Some heavenly music, – which even now I do, –
To work mine end upon their senses, that
This airy charm is for, I'll break my staff,
Bury it certain fadoms in the earth,
And deeper than did ever plummet sound
I'll drown my book.*

(V i 33-57)

– Activity –

This soliloquy of Prospero's, in which he calls up all the spirits of his magic art and gives them freedom is one of the most magnificent in the play. Read it to yourself and listen in your head to the sound and rhythms.

Now divide into groups of about six and devise a way of presenting the speech as a dramatic activity in itself. Do not try to be Prospero; divide the lines between you and become his thoughts. Some lines may be spoken in chorus, some by individual voices, and you can add movements or freeze frames to bring out the drama of the words. Place the actors in various parts of the room, perhaps, or use members of the group to represent the different creatures conjured up by Prospero. Use your imaginations and be as unrealistic as you like.

- Follow Up -

Use the same technique to present any other speech you choose, such as “Our revels now are ended” (IV i 48-58) or “You are three men of sin” (III iii 53-82).

Prompt Copy

- Evidence -

Prospero: *A solemn air, and the best comforter
To an unsettled fancy, cure thy brains,
Now useless, boil'd within thy skull! There stand,
For you are spell-stopp'd.
Holy Gonzalo, honourable man,
Mine eyes, ev'n sociable to the show of thine,
Fall fellowly drops. The charm dissolves apace;
And as the morning steals upon the night,
Melting the darkness, so their rising senses
Begin to chase the ignorant fumes that mantle
Their clearer reason. O good Gonzalo,
My true preserver, and a loyal sir
To him thou follow'st! I will pay thy graces
Home both in word and deed. Most cruelly
Didst thou, Alonso, use me and my daughter:
Thy brother was a furtherer in the act.
Thou art pinch's for't now, Sebastian. Flesh and blood,
You, brother mine, that entertain'd ambition,
Expell'd remorse and nature; whom, with Sebastian, –
Whose inward pinches therefor are most strong, –
Would here have kill'd your King; I do forgive thee,
Unnatural though thou art. Their understanding
Begins to swell; and the approaching tide
Will shortly fill the reasonable shore,
That now lies foul and muddy. Not one of them
That yet looks on me, or would know me: Ariel,
Fetch me the hat and rapier in my cell:
I will discase me, and myself present
As I was sometime Milan: quickly, spirit;
Thou shalt ere long be free.*

Ariel sings and helps to attire him.

*Where the bee sucks, there suck I:
In a cowslip's bell I lie;
There I couch when owls do cry.
On the bat's back I do fly
After summer merrily.
Merrily, merrily shall I live now
Under the blossom that hangs on the bough.*

- Prospero: *Why, that's my dainty Ariel! I shall miss thee;
But yet thou shalt have freedom: so, so, so.
To the King's ship, invisible as thou art:
There shalt thou find the mariners asleep
Under the hatches; the master and the boatswain
Being awake, enforce them to this place,
And presently, I prithee.*
- Ariel: *I drink the air before me, and return
Or ere your pulse twice beat.*
- Gonzago: *All torment, trouble, wonder and amazement
Inhabits here: some heavenly power guide us
Out of this fearful country!*
- Prospero: *Behold, sir King,
The wronged Duke of Milan, Prospero:
For more assurance that a living Prince
Does now speak to thee, I embrace thy body;
And to thee and thy company I bid
A hearty welcome.*
- Alonzo: *Whether thou be'st he or no,
Or some enchanted trifle to abuse me,
As late I have been, I not know: thy pulse
Beats, as of flesh and blood; and, since I saw thee,
Th' affliction of my mind amends, with which,
I fear, a madness held me: this must crave –
And if this be at all – a most strange story.
Thy dukedom I resign, and do entreat
Thou pardon me my wrongs. – But how should Prospero
Be living and be here?*
- Prospero: *First, noble friend,
Let me embrace thine age, whose honour cannot
Be measur'd or confin'd.*
- Gonzago: *Whether this be
Or be not, I'll not swear.*
- Prospero: *You do yet taste
Some subtleties o' the isle, that will not let you
Believe things certain. Welcome, my friends all!*
(V i 58-125)

– Activity –

Imagine you are the director of a production. Read these speeches carefully, thinking how you can make them come to dramatic life on the stage.

Copy the text above and paste it on to a larger piece of paper, keeping it to the left, with plenty of room on the right for your instructions. In one colour put all your suggestions to the actors – how certain lines should be delivered etc, and in another colour add all the suggestions to the stage manager about lighting effects, music, etc.

You will probably need to make a stage plan on which to plot your main moves, blocking in the action in general terms. You have only a small section of the play here, but you will need to allow for what led to it and what follows it: for instance, some inner stage seems to be needed for the discovery of Ferdinand and Miranda.

– Follow Up –

You may like to develop your production scheme with some drawings of the setting and of costumes. *The Tempest* is especially stimulating to a designer since it is not firmly placed in any historical period and has elements of a fairy tale. So your imagination could devise any costumes and setting you like: you could also incorporate some of the images or themes you find in the play – like the sea, or the Golden Age.

You can of course apply the same method to any other scene or fragment of the play. How would you stage the opening storm? What about the Masque? Work with a partner on any other section of the play you choose.

Another possible follow up is to get another group to present your scene, with you directing them.

Dramatic Conflict

– Evidence –

The Tempest is not mere spectacle or story of a magician's supernatural dominance of men and spirits. Nor does it lack suspense. The conflict that makes drama is present in Prospero, and its resolution comes, not so much of physical, as of moral and mental travail. ... Desire for vengeance has apparently lain dormant in Prospero through the years of his banishment, and now, with the sudden advent of his foes, the great wrong of twelve years before is stirring present again, arousing the passions and stimulating the will to action.

– F Davidson, *The Tempest: An Interpretation*, 1962

There is no suspense in the play because Prospero can control future as well as present action. His foreknowledge enables him to control all that occurs within the confines of the play. ... Nor can we believe that Prospero has yet to bring his fury under the control of reason. If he really had to wait for Ariel to persuade him to mercy, would he have arranged the union of his daughter with Ferdinand? Prospero has already brought order to himself and his island before the play opens.

– Rose Zimbardo, *Form and Disorder in The Tempest*, 1963

These are two very conflicting views of *The Tempest*. Which comes nearer to your own? Do you find a lack of suspense? If you have seen the play in the theatre did the outcome seem clear from the start, or soon after? Was there genuine suspense of any kind? Look at these lines of Prospero's:

At this hour

Lies at my mercy all my enemies. (IV i 263-4)

Do you feel that Prospero at this stage really intends to exact revenge? Look too at the exchange with Ariel (V i 16-32). Is it Ariel who puts the idea of forgiveness into his mind, or did he intend this all along?

– Activity –

In the struggle with his enemies Prospero has shown himself to be so much in command that we never really doubt who will come out on top. We feel, perhaps, they are just puppets manipulated by his strings. (Yet Sebastian and Antonio seem to remain unmoved.) Conflict, if it is present in the play at all, must therefore lie within Prospero.

Work in pairs to search for any evidence in the play of his inner conflicts, or conflicts he has already resolved before the play begins. (See also the activity on *Prospero's Magic*.) Choose a team of about three people to be Prospero: the rest should question them about his inner feelings and conflicts. Any of them may answer. Use the evidence you collected to direct attention to specific moments and lines in the play.

– Follow Up –

Use the material to write an essay on the dramatic qualities of *The Tempest* in the theatre.

Story In Stills

– Procedure –

It is important to understand that formalised symbolic tableaux are what is required rather than realistic presentation, so a good warm up activity is to work in pairs on statues and sculptors. Each in turn is sculptor and moulds the other into a symbolic shape to represent an abstract; start with more concrete ones like a sports person or dancer, but move quickly onto greed, hunger, pity, etc.

Alternatively, or additionally, work in threes on holiday postcards – a tableau from each group to represent a holiday destination in symbolic form, for the others to guess. Once tuned in to this way of working you will think much more imaginatively.

Working in groups of fours or fives, each group selects one of the following to present in a series of three freeze frames:

1. Sebastian and Antonio's plot against Alonso. (II i)
2. Stephano and Trinculo's meeting with Caliban (II ii) and the scene which follows.
3. The banquet presented and then snatched away (III iii), with Ariel's Harpy speech.
4. The "glistening apparel", IV i, line 165 to end of scene.

The sequences are then shown to other groups who guess what is being represented and discuss how successfully the underlying themes came through.

Example: *Here enters Ariel before: then Alonso, with a frantic gesture, attended by Gonzalo; Sebastian and Antonio in like manner, attended by Adrian and Francisco: they all enter the circle which Prospero had made, and there stand charm'd; which Prospero observing, speaks:*

This extract from V i will serve as a useful illustration before starting – perhaps the whole class could try this one as an example.

– Follow Up –

1. There is a natural step from this to dumbshow or mime – from frozen pictures to a stylised form of slow action. Any sequences from the play can be presented in this way, as long as you keep in mind the need to look at the essence and not the details of plot or storyline.
2. Another idea is to speed up movements like a silent film. The result will be comic but laughter is a great aid to memory.

Question and Answer: A Teacher Directed Activity

– Procedure –

Students need to have a good knowledge of the play to do this and it can be useful for revision.

Select from the text a series of short questions and answers, enough for each student to have one or the other, and write each on a separate card. Then shuffle the cards and give one to each student. Students then go round the group repeating their phrase over and over until they find its partner. The only restriction is that they may not say anything other than the line on the card. When question and answer are reunited, the pair join a circle round the outside of the group and wait until everyone has completed the task. Ask each pair to deliver question and answer and tell the rest who they are and the circumstances of the exchange.

Examples

Dost thou forget From what a torment I did free thee?	No.
Hast thou not dropped from heaven?	Out o' the moon, I do assure thee.
What is your name?	Miranda. – O my father, I have broke your hest to say so.
Dost thou hear?	Your tale, sir, would cure deafness.
How shall this be compassed? Canst thou bring me to the party?	Yea, yea, my lord: I'll yield him thee, asleep.
Wherefore did they not That hour destroy us?	Well demanded, wench: my tale provokes that question.
But how should Prospero Be living and be here?	First, noble friend, Let me embrace thine age, whose honour cannot Be measured or confined.
How now? moody? What is't thou canst demand?	My liberty.

- Follow Up -

Students can devise their own versions of this game. The lines do not have to be questions and answers; they could be any line and its response.

Another follow up activity is *Quotation Charades*:

Groups of about six have to guess the quotation which has been given to one of their number and which is conveyed to them by mime and gestures. Whoever guesses it then runs to the organiser for the next and repeats the process. The team completing all the quotations first is the winner.

Exchange of Insults: A Teacher Directed Activity

- Procedure -

The idea behind this activity is to involve students directly in the language of the play and, at the same time, to explore a little of the antagonism between Prospero and Caliban.

Divide the class into two groups – Caliban and Prospero – and give one line of “insult” to each student. It doesn’t matter that more than one should end up with the same insult. Perhaps you could photocopy the lines and cut them up to distribute. Now ask students to make the lines their own by walking around and repeating them in various different ways and with different expressions. When students are familiar with their own insults, line them up facing one another, Calibans opposite Prosperos. Start by getting each to shout his or her insult to the person opposite, who then responds. Then experiment with adding movement – the insulter advancing and the receiver backing away, perhaps, or a more elaborate pattern involving all students; they could weave in and out of the opposing group, delivering the abuse to a particular person, eyeball to eyeball. Ask the class to make suggestions on how to bring out the qualities of the language.

A group performance is the climax of the activity.

Examples

Caliban:

*As wicked dew as e’er my mother brush’d
With raven’s feather from unwholesome fen
Drop on you both!*

*A southwest blow on ye
And blister you all o’er.*

*All the charms
Of Sycorax, toads, beetles, bats, light on you!*

*You taught me language and my profit on’t
Is, I know how to curse. The red plague rid you
For learning me your language.*

Prospero:

*For this, be sure, tonight thou shalt have cramps
Side-stitches that shall pen thy breath up;*

Urchins
*Shall for that vast of night that they may work
All exercise on thee.*

*Thou shalt be pinch'd
As thick as honeycomb, each pinch more stinging
Than bees that made 'em.*

*Thou poisonous slave, got by the devil himself
Upon thy wicked dam*

*Thou most lying slave,
Whom stripes may move, not kindness.*

*I'll rack thee with old cramps,
Fill all thy bones with aches, make thee roar,
That beasts shall tremble at thy din.*

– Follow Up –

This activity will naturally lead to an exploration of the reasons for the exchanges. Ask the Calibans to search for lines which put his view – like

This island's mine etc, (I ii 333)

and all the Prosperos to find their reasons in the form of quotations, for example:

*Thou didst seek to violate
The honour of my child. (I ii 349-350)*

The exercise can then be repeated, with each student having one piece of evidence to deliver to the opposing side.

Hot Seat: A Teacher Directed Activity

– Procedure –

This only works if the students know the play quite well, so it is ideal as revision.

Divide the class into groups of about five or six and allocate to each student a major character. Each group could contain: a Prospero, Caliban, Miranda, Ferdinand, Alonso and Antonio, or some similar combination. Each of these in turn takes the hot seat – a chair placed facing the half circle formed by the rest of the group, and, while occupying it, must answer in role the questions put by the rest of the group, who are not in character until their turn comes to take the hot seat themselves. The kinds of questions which work best are about motive or reactions to events; as much value lies in the framing of good questions as in the answers given.

You will find that there will be disagreements within the groups about some of the answers; these should send students back to the text for evidence.

– Examples –

- Prospero could be asked:
“Did you always intend to forgive Alonso and your brother or was it Ariel’s comment that made up your mind?”
- Antonio could be asked about his future behaviour and his possible repentance for the wrongs he did his brother.
- Miranda might be asked about her feelings towards her future father-in-law.
- It helps if the process is demonstrated to the whole class before they start, with the teacher participating either as occupant of the hot seat or as questioner.

– Follow Up –

A variation on this involves concentrating on one character, say Prospero, and having several students instead of one speaking for him and answering the questions put by the rest of the class.

Or the whole group can become Miranda or Caliban, to answer the teacher’s questions in role.

All these techniques can lead to essay writing about the chosen character.

A Teacher's Guide to the Book

Procedure

1. The teacher should first read the book to himself to become familiar with the content and to select the material to be discussed in class.

2. The teacher should then divide the class into groups of about five or six members each. Each group should be given a copy of the book and a copy of the questions to be discussed.

3. The teacher should then assign each group to read the book and to discuss the questions. The teacher should circulate among the groups and listen to their discussions.

4. The teacher should then call on each group to report their findings to the class.

5. The teacher should then lead a class discussion of the book.

Examples

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- 5. The teacher should then lead a class discussion of the book.

Follow Up

1. The teacher should assign each group to read the book and to discuss the questions. The teacher should circulate among the groups and listen to their discussions.

2. The teacher should then call on each group to report their findings to the class.

3. The teacher should then lead a class discussion of the book.

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